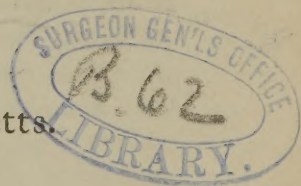


Duplicate

A
DESCRIPTION
OF THE
Situation, Climate, Soil and Productions
OF
Certain Tracts of Land
IN THE
DISTRICT OF MAINE,
AND
Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



1793 or later?

A
D E S C R I P T I O N

O F T H E

Situation, Climate, Soil and Productions, &c.

THE Lands, of which a description is given in the following pages, are situated in the counties of Hancock and Washington, in the District of Maine and commonwealth of Massachusetts. They are divided into two tracts—the first lying on the sea-coast and containing one million two hundred and sixty-five thousand and seventy-six acres—the second lying on the waters of the Kennebeck river and containing one million and sixty thousand, one hundred and sixty-four acres.

The lower tract is divided into townships, conformably to the annexed map, which exhibits the exterior lines of survey, and shews its beautiful and advantageous situation, as bounding on the Atlantic ocean, the Penobscot and Schoodiack rivers. Some small navigable lakes, which are a continuation of the river Schoodiack, stretch along the northern line of this tract, and nearly communicate with the waters of the Penobscot river, and thereby give it the inestimable advantage of being almost surrounded with water. The rivers that fall into the sea, and the smaller streams that are connected

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connected with the Penobscot and Schoodiack, and which are plentifully scattered through the tract, are not displayed on the map, as they could not be delineated accurately, for want of a proper survey which had a view to this particular object.—This is now accomplishing.

The upper tract has the advantage of the Kennebeck river passing through the centre of it, and of being watered by the various branches of that river.

The southern boundary of these lands lies in forty-four degrees, fifteen minutes north latitude, and the eastern boundary in sixty-seven degrees, ten minutes longitude west from London. They are consequently situated in the centre of the temperate zone, and in the same parallel of latitude with the best climates of Europe.

The vicinity of the ocean, correcting the state of the air, occasions the most agreeable and salubrious temperature of climate, of which the most pleasing proofs are furnished in the uncommon health and longevity of the inhabitants. Indeed there is but one opinion on this subject. Diseases (by universal concurrence of testimony) are hardly known in this country.

These lands, now a part of the state of Massachusetts, were so carefully preserved by the British government, while the colonies were under its jurisdiction, that the crown's confirmation of grants to individuals (made by the Legislature of the province) lying betwixt the rivers Penobscot and Schoodiack, was uniformly refused,—as well with a view of preserving the masts and valuable timber, while it remained a royal domain, as to confine the inhabitants of
Massachusetts

Massachusetts (of whose importance a jealous apprehension was entertained) within certain limits—by these means preventing an extension of settlement, and a consequent augmentation of numbers.

At the treaty of peace these lands became the property of the state of Massachusetts without any controul. Since which various plans have been projected, and discussions have taken place in the Legislature concerning the best mode of disposing of them. It was, at length, determined to alienate them by sales to individuals, from a conviction that the energy of private enterprize would soon lead to a rapid settlement and population; to accomplish which was the leading and influential object of the state; and, as a further encouragement, it was resolved that they should be exempted from all state taxes until the year one thousand eight hundred and one.

It would be an ungracious task to attempt to contrast these lands with those of an interior situation in the several districts of the United States. It will be sufficient to say, that superior pretensions have never appeared in favor of any lands in this country, offered for sale or settlement, and that they are not exceeded by any in the District of Maine, embracing the same quantity of adjoining acres in a tract. The character that will be given of them in the following sheets will be drawn from the most authentic and incontestible documents—supported by names, some of whom are universally known and respected throughout the United States.

Within

Within the period of a few years this District will be erected into a separate state and become a member of the Union. The votes of the inhabitants were recently required, by the state of Massachusetts, to determine whether they were ripe for a dismemberment; when it was opposed but by a small majority in the District.

But when its vicinity to thick settled counties, combined with the incentive that a new country, possessing such singular advantages, offers, is taken into consideration, it must naturally be inferred that the population and settlement will be rapid. This will induce a separation, which must be accompanied by all the advantages that will be derived from the independence of its situation.

It will open an extensive field for the ambition and talents of individuals, who will have all the honors and emoluments of the general and state governments to stimulate their laudable enterprize and exertions.

By the return of the Marshal in one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one, the District contained ninety-six thousand five hundred and forty inhabitants; and when a State-Census was taken in one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two the return was upwards of one hundred and six thousand—so great was the increase from natural population as well as emigration!

The population of the District of Maine already exceeds that of either of the five following states, *viz.* Rhode-Island, Vermont, Delaware, Kentucky, and Georgia—each of which, by the constitution of the United States, is
equally

equally represented in the Senate with the largest states, besides its proportional suffrage in the House of Representatives.

Some of the genteel families of Massachusetts inhabit the District, which renders a residence there more agreeable than in situations more remote from good neighbourhood. —It sends, at present, three members to Congress.

The degrees of heat and cold, throughout the year, are stated in the subjoined tables of meteorological experiments. In addition to which it may only be necessary to remark, that the extension of improvements is found to operate very sensibly in favor of the climate, so as greatly to shorten the duration of the winters, the cold of which is, at present, regular and temperate.

The winter, which may be said generally to commence about the tenth day of December and to continue until the twenty-fifth of March, is steady and serene. During this season the snow affords to the inhabitants a most convenient and easy transportation, enabling them to carry all articles, however heavy and bulky, to the mills, to the shipping ports, and to the market with the greatest facility; and, at the same time, gives a covering to the ground, by preventing the admission of frost, which greatly promotes a quick vegetation in the spring.

This is the season more peculiarly appropriate to festivity and amusement; by affording the means of easy conveyance it promotes the interchange of civilities and neighbourly attentions.

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The feed time is the months of August and September for winter, and as soon as the spring opens for summer grains.

The crops sown in the preceding year are, from the very rapid growth, reaped in July and August, and those put into the ground in the spring are reaped in September.

That period of the year, which offers a recess from the labours of the field, and other agricultural pursuits, may be appropriated to the profitable employment of fishing, by those who may prefer it to the no less lucrative business of lumbering, making pot and pearl ashes, collecting of bark, and clearing of land, &c.

These tracts abound in a variety of timber of an excellent quality, which principally consist of sugar maple, beech, ash, white and red oak, elm, hemlock, spruce, yellow birch, white cedar, white pines of the finest growth, and black birch and curled maple for cabinet ware.

The soil is well adapted to all arable and pasture purposes, and is easily cleared, there being but little underwood: from its abundant production of the best grasses, natural and artificial, it is peculiarly fitted for furnishing a great supply of butter and cheese, as well as for raising and fattening horses, mules, black cattle, sheep, and every kind of stock. The sheep thrive exceedingly well and are remarkable for the abundance of their fleeces, and the fineness of their wool.

Large stocks of cattle may be supported from the spontaneous growth of the wilderness, in which there is not only the browse common to all wood-lands, but a full supply of succulent

succulent plants, on which the cattle eagerly feed, and from which they receive equal benefit as from cultivated grass, both in summer and winter. This point, confirmed by experience, is naturally inferred from the District being the only residence of the Moose Deer, which is the largest known animal in the United States that feeds on herbage, and which fatten on these pastures and savannahs.

The young cattle that are raised in these woods are as large as those fed in common pastures, and even cattle intended for beef fatten there exceedingly well.

While black cattle are thus fed in summer, the first settlers may, on their arrival, procure from the grass, cut in many parts of the country, and on the natural meadows, which are very abundant and interspersed through the tract, stretching along the sides of the rivers, in wide ranges, a full supply of hay to maintain large stocks throughout the winter; and, from the great quantity of rock-weed, which is so abundant on the sea coast, there is an inexhaustible fund of manure.

From experience the soil is found to be well adapted to raising of wheat, rye, barley, oats, buck wheat, Indian corn, hops, peas, beans, potatoes (the last of an uncommon good quality,) cabbages, turneps, and other esculent roots, all of which are cultivated in the lands of the District with great success, and which, in a short time, will become considerable objects of exportation—together with the important articles of flax and hemp, to the culture of which these lands are eminently favorable.

The

The quantities of iron ore, which abound throughout the whole extent of this District, afford additional means of profiting by the natural resources of the country, especially when the plentiful supply of wood, for the use of furnaces and forges, and the numerous mill seats, for rolling and slitting mills, are taken into consideration.

Glass-works may, with equal ease and advantage, be erected, as all the constituent articles, that enter into the composition of glass, may be procured in the greatest abundance. As for fire wood, which forms the most essential expence in the manufacture, it may be obtained, nearly for the labour of cutting it.—Combined with the cheapness of transporting to a market such bulky articles of manufacture, these are advantages, which no other part of the sea coast of the United States enjoys.

Ship building, where wood and iron abound, must necessarily become an object of very lucrative pursuit.—Hence it is found that this branch of business has astonishingly increased, insomuch that in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six, there was but one top-sail vessel belonging to the Kennebeck river.—At present, so great has been the accumulation of capital, from the profits of external trade, that twelve ships, besides brigs and other vessels, are now on the stocks in that single river, the greater number of which will be owned in, and navigated out of, Kennebeck.—Foreign orders for ship building can here be executed on cheaper terms, than in any part of the United States.

The inexhaustible stock of wood, with which the land is timbered, applicable from its variety, to every purpose of house building, furniture, ship building, masts, spars, implements

plements of husbandry, carriages, casks, fuel, pot and pearl ashes, with the extreme facility of carrying the lumber, first to the mills, and then to a market, either at home or abroad, must give a high value to these lands over all others, which do not border on the ocean, and which, from their remote interior situation, are deprived of these inestimable advantages.

The connection betwixt this District and the commercial towns of Boston, Marble-head, Salem, Beverley, Newburyport, Gloucester, &c. is very considerable, insomuch that several hundred vessels, of various sizes, are constantly employed between these places and the District of Maine, which affords the advantage of an intimate intercourse, for the supply of their mutual wants.

Boston and the other towns, that stretch along the coast, are principally furnished with fuel from the District, and nearly all the lumber, shipped from Boston and the neighbouring towns to foreign ports, is supplied from thence; for want of a sufficient commercial capital, the District is compelled to have recourse to these circuitous means of exporting, to a foreign market, the greater part of its own produce; besides which, the British settlements, in the vicinity, are furnished with immense quantities of lumber, which are re-exported to their West India islands. There are, likewise, large quantities of masts and lumber annually exported directly to Europe.

In the progress of clearing the grounds, a more plentiful supply of bark is furnished in one year, than the tanneries can consume in seven. Hence this article, from the increasing demand in Europe, may become a valuable object of export, as it will well bear the expence of transportation, by being compressed into a small compass.

So striking indeed is the difference of situation in favor of these lands, from their vicinity to a sea coast, abounding in the safest and most accessible harbours, that the timber, which, in the interior parts of America, is regarded as an incumbrance, is here converted into a mine of wealth, the riches of which are renewable forever. Nor are the advantages of this situation confined to the facility of exporting the productions of the country. Others of a conspicuous nature present themselves, as they regard the convenience and œconomy (particularly with respect to land carriage for heavy articles) with which the emigrants from Europe, or from the states of America, can transport themselves, their families, and effects, and the ease of intercourse which they will afterwards enjoy with other parts of the world—They step from the vessel, in which they embark, to the shore of their destination, and are at home.

On their arrival, by the labor of a few hours, a single person may provide a sufficient quantity of the best fish to support a family for many days.

The minds of the emigrants being thus relieved from the great care of providing subsistence and transporting their property, they are enabled at once to turn their attention to the establishment of their families, and the cultivation of their lands, which they may do in perfect safety, under the protection of salutary laws and excellent municipal regulations.

In this District there are ten sea-ports of entry, *viz.* York, Biddeford and Pepperlborough, Portland, Falmouth, Bath, Wiscasset, Penobscot, Frenchman's Bay, Machias, and Passamaquoddy, established by the laws of the United States, which

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are rapidly encreasing in foreign trade—all these ports were surveyed at an immense expence by the British, and the depth of soundings, in all the harbours and channels, has been accurately delineated on charts with the respective bearings of the coast. These charts have been published at great cost, in a masterly manner, under the direction of the lords of the admiralty in Great Britain.

If a few more commercial houses, and those of respectable capital, were established in these ports, it would give a considerable stimulus to the settlement of the lands, by affording the means of purchasing, and shipping to a market, the various and valuable produce of the country.—Those who have already engaged in this business have been exceedingly successful, and their profits will be great, in an increased ratio, in proportion to the extent of their capital.

In forming settlements on these lands, the state of Massachusetts becomes the country of the emigrants, in the privileges and immunities of which, they equally participate with all deserving citizens. It is well known that there is no state, where the laws are better administered and property secured, or the government more respected than in this powerful and well ordered commonwealth.

Besides, the ease with which the inhabitants of these lands may procure their timber, boards, shingles, lime, bricks, clay, and stone, will give a facility to settlement and accommodation scarcely exceeded in old, and no where surpassed in new countries.

It must be peculiarly grateful to the heads of families to be informed of the pointed attention paid by Massachusetts to
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the education of youth, and the maintenance of the ministry.—Whence the inhabitants are distinguished by their acquirements in learning, and the regularity of their deportment.

The state has made a liberal grant of one thousand two hundred and eighty acres, in every township of six miles square, for the use of the first settled minister, the ministry, schools, and other public objects. These public spirited endowments are not to be met with in the political arrangements of other states.

Notice having been taken of the great quantity of valuable timber, which grows on these tracts, and the several uses to which it is applicable, it is proper to observe that the lands are every where intersected by streams of the best water, furnishing numerous and excellent mill-seats, and providing the means of watering immense quantities of meadow.

Besides, tide-mills, where the water is not frozen during the winter, may be erected on all the rivers, which will yield the greatest profits to the owners of the mills, the proprietors of the land, and the persons who follow the business of lumbering.

The contiguity to the banks of Newfoundland, and to the banks which lie immediately on the coast, must give a decided preference to the District of Maine over every other place in the United States for the fishery business, and cannot be mentioned without exciting great and well founded expectations in all those, who may meditate either settlement or purchase.

Befide

Beside the codfish on these banks, which, as an article of commerce, is so highly valuable, the coast abounds in seals, whales, halybut, polluck, cusk, haddock, bass, mackarel, eels, flounders, tom cod, &c. &c. and with lobsters, crabs, oysters, scollops, clams and other shell-fish. The rivers abound in herring, shad, sturgeon, smelts, and particularly salmon, by taking and curing of which a foreign trade is carried on to the extent of many thousand barrels. The lakes and ponds furnish perch, and salmon-trout weighing from five to six pounds.

Nothing is wanting but an increased population, and a larger monied capital, to render the sea-ports of this coast the great emporium of the fishing trade.

Superadded to this inexhaustible resource, are all the invitations to agricultural pursuits, in a fertile soil and good climate, with the extra benefits resulting from those objects which, in a less favored situation, are of detriment to the farmer—such as converting every species of timber to lucrative purposes. In the interval of farming duties, the manufacture of maple-sugar may become a profitable avocation, by employing the labor of women and children. In the months of February and March the juice may be extracted in the greatest quantity—The process is rendered easier, and the proceeds turned to better account, from the vicinity of these lands to sea navigation.

The quantity of game, with which this country abounds, must afford great pleasure, as well as profit, to the inhabitants—moose, deer, bears, beaver, sable, otter, minx, martin, foxes, musquashes, rabbits, &c. whose furs form an important

ant article in trade, are among the number; to which may be added the greatest variety of land and water-fowl, such as geese, ducks, teal, widgeon, brandts, pheasants, partridges, pigeons, &c.

It may be proper here to observe how singularly this situation is favored for an intimate and advantageous commerce with the West India islands, whose principal wants consist of lumber, fish, and salted provisions.

The policy of opening the islands to the free admission of American produce, and of breaking through the system of prohibitory laws, has become a favorite doctrine, and is daily gaining ground amongst the nations of Europe: For it is clearly evident, that the colonies must flourish in proportion as they are placed in a state of ease and plenty;—From whence a well grounded expectation may be entertained of a great augmentation of exports from the District of Maine, by means of the advantageous connection, which their local situation and circumstances afford.

A moments reflection must evince the advantages to be expected from an intercourse with the French islands in particular, which have recently been laid waste by the insurrections of the slaves, and which will require immense quantities of lumber to repair the devastations.

It has been already noticed that no country in the United States abounds so plentifully in this article, or is more happily placed for profiting from this resource.

As for fish, the greatest abundance may be procured throughout the whole extent of the coast. With respect to
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the important staples of butter, cheese, and salted provisions, (both beef and pork,) it will furnish them in great plenty, and on cheap terms, this being, confessedly, the best grazing District in the Union.

As Ireland has, comparatively, abandoned these objects, and is turning its pasture into arable grounds, the eastern states of America are making a rapid progress towards supplying the deficiency. Already are the salted provisions of these states in the highest reputation, and greatest demand.

Nothing is wanting but additional population, to place these lands on a footing with those of a similar soil, situation and climate in Europe.

This period cannot be far distant, as it is computed, on a moderate calculation, that the population, in the middle and eastern states, doubles itself in the space of fifteen to sixteen years, from the advantages of the taxes being low, the lands cheap, and the means of subsistence so very abundant.

Another powerful cause of rapid population, arises out of the present convulsed state of Europe, and the propagation of principles and opinions, that have a tendency to subvert the existing governments.

Considerable emigrations must ensue from this general confusion; and the United States certainly offer the most desirable refuge, for the poor and oppressed of all nations to retire to, as well as for those, who are in more favored circumstances—a country, where civil and religious liberty exist in all their purity—where property is so well protected by the laws, and so easily acquired by honest industry—a country,

whose prosperity is so progressive, and which, in extreme youth, has exhibited such marks of firmness and vigor, must clearly bespeak a more than common weight of character, at a meridian age.

HAVING mentioned documents of incontrovertible authority, to support the credit of these lands, it becomes expedient to publish answers to a number of queries, on the subject, addressed to a person, whose knowledge of that country was obtained from observations, during various excursions he made there.

This character stands too high to admit of entertaining the least doubt of the truth of the facts, which he asserts—Indeed, more respectable testimony could not be had in the United States.

To which are added the answers to, nearly, the same questions, on the part of a committee of their own body, appointed by the Senators and Representatives, from the District of Maine, in the Legislature of that state.

Much additional evidence, in confirmation of these reports, might be published, but it would swell this sketch to too voluminous a size.

Hingham,

Hingham, February 26, 1793.

Dear Sir,

YOUR Favor, covering a number of questions, came to hand by the last post—Being confined at home by a storm, I now take up my pen to make such answers to them, as my knowledge of facts will authorise—To state them to me did not require an apology—I shall always be happy, when you point out instances, in which I may, in any degree, become more useful to you and my friends.

I shall recapitulate your questions, and subjoin my answers.

“ What was the population of the District of Maine in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one, when the Census was taken?”

Ninety-six thousand five hundred and forty.

“ What has been the increase of population, by the most reasonable estimate, since that time?”

About one-eighth per cent annually. This, you will observe, is double the common increase of our country—I suppose the migrations, thereto, to be equal to the natural growth.

“ What causes, in your opinion, will be most likely to accelerate the population of the District?”

No time should be lost in opening more principal roads through the country; this will facilitate a view of the lands, (their value only wants to be known to gain general attention) and accommodate after settlers. To cut a road, through the
 Lottery

Lottery Townships, from west to east, where the bays terminate, and the rivers commence,—so as that they can be made passable by bridges, and on this road establish, in every ten miles, a good public house—People would then travel, through the country, without difficulty, from Boston to the eastern boundary of the United States. These are among the causes which, in my opinion, will accelerate the population of the District.

“ Are not the advantages of situation, and the fertility of the soil, in this country, great stimulants to the industry of its inhabitants?”

Its situation being in a healthy latitude, the inhabitants become strong and nervous, and labour ceases to be a burthen; a degree of it was never an evil—Hence, from the fertility of the soil, and the ease with which the surplus finds a market, people are stimulated to great industry, and are, thereby, preserved from that want, which naturally succeeds idleness and dissipation. Their situation will, always, evince the truth of the observation, that activity of body begets vigor of mind, the parent of information and a source of happiness; and you will have the most incontestible proofs, from the silvered locks of many of its aged inhabitants, that they inhale a salubrious atmosphere.

“ Is it not probable, from the progression of population, and cheapness of living, that manufactures will flourish, and rapidly increase, in the District?”

From the present large demands for the produce of our farms, and the ease with which all the produce of the District may reach a market, and its being a country so fully accommodated

modated by large navigable rivers, down which produce may find its way to the sea, for a long while to come, and long after the inland parts of our country will want a market for their surplus; are suggestions, in my mind, that the people of the District will not, for some time to come, give up agriculture to manufactures—Besides, it is with difficulty that we lead men off from old habits to new pursuits, and, whenever they are brought to it, they retire with reluctance, and approach with doubt. However, when it shall appear to be their interest to manufacture, they can always attend to it, as they have the raw materials, for manufacturing most of the necessities of life, among themselves.

“ What advantages are derived to the District of Maine, from the independence of the United States, and from the system of legislation in Massachusetts, that will tend to promote a more rapid settlement of this country?”

They derive all those advantages, with others, in being freemen, and of enjoying those rights, which are the sweeteners of life. The lands can, *now*, be granted, by the commonwealth of Massachusetts, without any royal signature. The system of legislation has been mild, towards those inhabitants, and the Lottery Townships were exempt from taxes, and, those sold are so to remain for many years—In general, where taxes have been assessed, they have been remitted, and have been given to the people for making roads, support of the gospel and schools.

“ Does not the vicinity of the sea countervail the small difference of latitudinal position, and render the climate of Maine more temperate than that of the Genesee country?”

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From their vicinity to the sea, the inhabitants enjoy the benefit of those saline particles, which meliorate the air, and make it much less acute than it is far inland—I am not acquainted with the Genesee country, cannot, therefore, contrast the cold there, with the degree of it in the District of Maine.

“ Does not the clearing of the land sensibly affect the climate, and render it more moderate?”

The clearing of the country has been so partial in the District of Maine, that we can hardly determine any thing, from experience, on the important subject; philosophy is so fully in favor of the proposition, that we ought not to doubt, but that the clearing of the land will have the effect suggested.

“ Does not the meadow, and upland pasture, yield well of the grass, natural to the soil, and of the English grasses, when sown?”

From the natural grass we have good feed and mowing—all the exotic grasses have succeeded well, where trial has been made of them.

“ Are the lands, in this District, well adapted to the raising of oxen, sheep, mules and horses; and are the fleeces of the sheep large, and the quality of the wool good?”

The lands are very friendly to the growth of oxen, mules and horses, after they are cleared—and, what is peculiarly advantageous to the settlers, the cattle fatten well from the spontaneous growth of the wilderness. The sheep are very healthy and strong, their fleeces are large, and the texture of the wool fine and good.

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“ Does not the arable ground, of this country, yield very well, when sown in English grain, as wheat, barley, oats, flax, &c.”

We have had abundant proofs that these will do well, and that the soil appears to be very friendly to them—Those, also, who have planted Indian-corn, have succeeded very well, where the land has been in order for it, and where the seed has been of a proper kind.

“ Does the abundance of grass, and hay, promise to render it a great provision country, in meats, butter, and cheese?”

This country, will undoubtedly, be a good provision country, as the feed is nutritious and sweet,—essential qualities for making good *butter and cheese*.

“ Is the soil well adapted to hemp and flax?”

To the growth of flax we find it exceedingly friendly—I have not seen an experiment of hemp, but, from the nature and strength of the soil, I have no doubt that hemp will succeed well.

“ What are the different kinds of fish, taken on the coast and in the rivers?”

Your question would have extended little farther, than it now extends, had you asked me to have enumerated to you the whole finny tribe—this I cannot do, or enumerate all the different kinds of fish to be found in the District. I shall content myself with mentioning a few, the most common—The cod, the haddock, the cusk, and the polluck. These are the fish, which are, generally, caught with the hook, and dried. Besides these, are the salmon, the shad, the bass, the herring, the alewives, &c. &c. Added to these are, the shell-
fish

fish, on the shores, the lobster, the clam, the scollop, and the crab. I ought not to have omitted the salmon-trout, because they are, here, very large and good, weighing four or five pounds—besides the eel, the flounder, the tom-cod, and the smelt are of daily and common use.

“ *Do the banks and rivers, within the District, so abound in fish, as to ensure a certain and ample supply at all seasons?* ”

Permit me to observe here, that, to have a supply of bank and river fish, at all times, depends very much on our own conduct: for a supply of the bank-fish, in our harbours, and near our shores, depends on the state of the river-fish. These, nature has pointed to the sources of the rivers, the ponds, and lakes, the quiet waters of which give that security to the spawn, necessary to its existence—Hence it becomes important, if you would preserve those fish, to keep the passages open to the lakes, and prevent any unnatural obstruction being thrown in their way—The loss of these fish, to the inland-settler, is peculiarly injurious to him; but the evil doth not end here:—in proportion as the river-fish decrease, so will your shore-fish dwindle; for they are allured into our harbours, and about our shores, in pursuit of the river-fish, in their passage to, and return from, the rivers; and, also, by the fry, which fall down the rivers late in the season; and, as those fish are the natural food of the bank-fish, they cannot find a support from any other source.—Hence it is important, to the proprietors of the inland country, to see that the mouths of the rivers, on most of which are mills, are kept open.—An attention to this may be considered as one mean, by which the commonwealth of Massachusetts may promote the interest

rest, and facilitate the settlement, of the District of Maine. Nothing, therefore, is wanting to secure a full supply of fish, for ever hereafter, but an act to prevent unnatural obstructions being thrown in their way.

“ Does not the proximity of the District to the banks of Newfoundland, and the smaller banks that lie on the coast, make it a most eligible situation for the establishment of fisheries?”

The proximity of the banks of Newfoundland would, doubtless, be important in pursuing the fishery in the District of Maine; but that is not all—The weather is so temperate, that, in prosecuting the business, less injury would be experienced from the heat, the most fatal enemy to the fish, than is suffered in, and about, Boston.—Besides, in many places, the fish are taken within a line's length of the shore; and they are of such a kind as that many of them will make the best table-fish.

In the Bay of Passamaquoddy there are pretty voyages made in small open boats without decks.

“ From your own observation, and from the best information you have received, what is your opinion of the comparative value of the land (in soil, situation, and other advantages) which was sold and conveyed by the commonwealth of Massachusetts, in January last, to Mr. B——, with the other lands of the District of Maine?”

I think it is not exceeded by any in the District, should you embrace the same quantity in any one tract, or, in other words, an equal number of adjoining acres.

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“ Is the communication, by water, between the town of Boston and the District of Maine, so easy, and convenient, as to facilitate, and occasion, great intercourse with that town, and, thereby, to accommodate the inhabitants of the District?”

Yes, in general—but, to be a little particular on this, there are, at the least, in my opinion, one hundred vessels constantly employed in transporting wood for fuel, and lumber, of all kinds, for building, in Boston, and for the West India market; besides, a great proportion of the vessels, trading from the District to Europe, and the West Indies, touch, on their return, at Boston, and seek a market for their cargoes; if they find one, which suits them, they unlade; if not, they run home and store the goods, waiting a more favorable opportunity for sale.

The transportation is so easy and cheap, from the District to Boston, that the importer of goods cannot consider it much of an evil, if he doth not unlade in Boston in the first instance.

“ What are the several species of game and wild fowl in the District?”

Hercin you have assigned me a task but little inferior to the question respecting the fish. I am not enough of a sportsman to enumerate the several species of game. I can tell you, however, that, in the District, there are a great number of moose, deer, bears, beaver, racoon, foxes, rabbits, sable, musquash, &c. Among the wild fowl are the goose, the duck, the wigeon, the dipper, &c. &c.

“ Will the productions of the middle states generally succeed in the District?”

I think

I think all will succeed excepting the cotton, and some garden-plants.—All the essentials certainly succeed, such as the Indian corn, the wheat, rye, barley, oats, flax, apples, &c.

“ *Have there been any discoveries of lead, copper, or iron ores?* ”

None, to my knowledge, but iron.

“ *Have coals been found in the District?* ”

Not any that has fallen under my notice.

“ *Do lime and stone, for building, abound in the District?* ”

Yes, they abound.

“ *What are the advantages to be derived from the wood that abounds in the neighbourhood of the sea?—May it be readily converted into planks, boards, scantling, shingles, and staves?* ”

The wood, near the sea, not timber, finds a ready market, in our different sea-ports, for fuel. The large, which we call timber-trees, such as the pine, spruce, hemlock, cedar, oaks, birches, maples, &c.—These answer, respectively, for shingles, boards, planks, staves, tun-timber, &c.

“ *May the wood, which is more remote from navigation, be profitably converted into pot and pearl ashes?* ”

From the hard wood the best of pot and pearl ashes may be made; but it is quite a question, among the farmers, how far it may be for their interest to attend to this manufacture, while clearing their land, whether, on the whole, their interest will be promoted by it or not; for, if all the wood is left on the ground, it promotes the burning of it—To have
what

what they call a good burn is very important—It prepares the ground for the seed, the ashes serve as manure, the burning, also, destroys the moss and the small brush—So that the clearing, thereby, is more complete, and the crop greatly promoted. If pot ashes are to be made from the wood, it must, after being cut, so as that it may be well handled, be hauled together and burnt on a good hearth, free from the air, otherwise the wind will deprive you of a great proportion of the ashes; and, from the want of a hearth, the ground will inhale a large proportion of the salts; and, on taking up the ashes, it will be impossible to avoid collecting, with the ashes, a large proportion of foreign matter. To ascertain the advantages of burning the wood on the ground, comparing that with the expence of hauling the wood together, and saving the ashes, must be the basis of such an enquiry, as will be necessary to a right decision of this question.

“ Are there many mill-seats in the District, and are they plentifully supplied with water?”

There are a great number of mill-seats in the District well supplied with water.—I do not remember that I ever heard it suggested, that, in this respect, the country was deficient.—The parts, which I have visited, I know are not.

“ What will be the expence of a saw-mill, and how much lumber will it saw annually?”

The expence of a mill depends, greatly, on the length of the dam, the nature of the ground, on which it is to be built, and the weight of water to be counteracted.—I think, however, from the expence our mills cost us, that from four

to

to five hundred pounds may be a pretty good estimate.—A good mill, fully supplied with water all the summer, and fully attended, night and day, will cut five hundred thousand of boards annually.

“ Do rock and sea-weed abound on the coast?”

Rock-weed is to be found, on most all the shores of the Maine, in very great plenty. What we call sea-weed is a very different vegetable.—This plant grows in harbours, in which are flat grounds, nearly uncovered at low water, is from three to four feet long, washed on shore by heavy storms—The District of Maine does not abound with these kind of lands.—The harbours are generally deep, and free from these flat grounds seen in Boston harbour.

“ What is the average price of uncultivated lands, in the settled townships, in the District?”

I cannot answer this question.—There are so many circumstances, which give real value to some spots over others, besides the difference of the soil, that I am left, in this matter, without that information necessary to a satisfactory answer.

“ Can the land be cleared for giving the first crop to the person who clears it?”

There are instances, where the first crop may refund the expence of clearing—This, however, is not common.

“ Is ginseng found in the District?”

Yes, ginseng is found in the District.

“ Which of the exotic fruits would succeed in the District?”

The apple, the pear, and the cherry.

“ What

“ What articles can the District of Maine furnish for the consumption of the West India islands, and for the European market?”

They can supply lumber, fish of all kinds, salted beef, and, for the European market, merchantable fish, square timber, deal boards, and different kinds of lumber—pot and pearl ashes—In short, all those articles which are now shipped from Boston.

“ When is the seed time and the harvest?”

I think September the best time for sowing the wheat and rye, and as soon as the ground opens in the spring, the spring grain should be put in—July and August may be considered as the months for harvesting.

“ When does the winter set in?”

About Christmas the snow generally covers the ground, and it remains, so covered, until towards April.

The inhabitants, interested in mills, generally commence sawing about the first of April.

The duration of winter is from the twentieth of December until the twentieth of March—generally about three months.—In these three months, from the regularity of the season, and from its being the most convenient time for doing many kinds of business, more is done, than in any three months in the year, especially among the lumber-men.

“ Are the harbours, in the District, safe and accessible?”

The harbours are very accessible, as the waters, around the shores, are generally deep, and the land generally high
about

about them, and good anchorage ground within.—I never met, in the District, a barred harbour, which depended on the tide for entrance, and they are, from the dissimilarity of the ground, easily discovered.—Their entrances are strongly marked by nature, and can hardly be mistaken by the attentive mariner.

“ *From the quantity of bark to be obtained in the District, do you suppose that the tanneries would flourish?* ”

Of the success of this business there cannot be a doubt.

“ *Might not bark become a valuable export from the District?* ”

Bark might become a valuable article of exportation without injury to the tanneries, which might be established in the District—for, in opening the country, there is more timber cut down in *one* year, the bark of which is useful in tanning, than the tanneries would use in *seven*—Great quantities are used in Boston every season—some of it has been sent on to Philadelphia, and there found a good market.

It would make a valuable article of export to Europe, if we could transport it, pressed into casks, after grinding it between stones, fitted on purpose, as our grain is ground—This saves a vast deal of room in the ship, and is, besides, ready for use on its arrival.

“ *What are the average prices of lumber, viz. masts, planks, boards, scantling, slaves, and shingles?* ”

I do not know the prices of masts.—Boards, at the mills, the last year, have been about six dollars—far east, more. They will, always, bring more, when they can be rafted,
from

from the mills, into the British lines.—Planks are, generally, double price to boards.—Shingles, eighteen inches by four, nine shillings.—The price of lumber, in the western part of the District of Maine, is, generally, three fourths of Boston price.

“ Is the sea navigation free through the winter?”

In many places it is perfectly so.—This we may ascribe to several causes:—from the rapidity of the tide, the ice is prevented from making:—from the great degree the tide flows, some places thirty feet:—from the great accession, hereby, of sea water, once in twelve hours; by which, the waters, in the bays and rivers, are preserved from chilling. In the bay of Passamaquoddy, as far north as any of our ships will lade, it is not uncommon for them to raft boards, from the shores, into the channel, and there load all winter.

“ Is the lumber business profitable to those persons, who now carry it on?”

Very much so.

“ Did the officers of the Massachusetts line, of the late army, propose to purchase these lands from the commonwealth?”

They did.

“ Do the lands abound in pines fit for masts?”

They do.

“ What are the sizes of the pines, and may they be brought to the shipping ports with convenience?”

They are of all sizes, generally large. They may be brought to the shipping-ports with convenience.

“ From

“ From the facility with which materials may be obtained, will the accommodation of emigrants, to that country, in point of dwelling, be cheap and convenient.

Their accommodation, in point of dwelling, will be very cheap and convenient.

AMONG the questions, which you have stated to me, there is one, which you seem to consider as of the first importance to have satisfactorily answered, *viz.*

“ Why any part of the District of Maine, if really a country so valuable in itself, as has been represented, should remain unsettled?”

As several circumstances, all of them susceptible of the clearest explanation, have combined to produce the delay of settlement, I must ask your indulgence in being more particular on this question, than on any which I have taken up.

It will be conclusively satisfactory, to shew why the District of Maine, however inviting, was not settled antecedent to the reduction of Canada, and the peace of one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three, to state, that the hostile disposition of the Indians, which it was the policy of the French and the Canadians to inspire, and stimulate, rendered all attempts at settlement, in certain parts of the District, during a period of one hundred and thirty years, impracticable. On the cession of Canada, in one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three, this obstacle to settlement was removed; and the banks of the Kennebeck river, which, from the commencement of the war, in one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, to the peace, had been covered with forts and garrisons, now present a peaceful and well settled country.

The following reasons will explain, why the settlement of the District has not been more rapid, than it was within the last thirty years.

Great Britain, always jealous of Massachusetts, omitted no opportunity of straitening her limits, and checking her importance.—This disposition was manifested on every occasion, and we never obtained a settlement of boundary, without the most evident partiality operating against us.

The lands, lying east of Penobscot river, were so circumstanced, that they could not be granted, by the province, without the approbation of the king; and, although the lands were, at different times, granted by the province, yet, every attempt, to obtain the royal approbation of these grants, (excepting in a single instance, in behalf of the favorite royal governor Barnard, in the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty-two) was without success; as, on a reference to the public documents, will fully appear.

This, effectually, prevented the settlement of the lands east of Penobscot river.

An early grant, of thirty miles square, to the west of that river, fell into the hands of a few people of property, by whom, when the late war commenced, arrangements were making for settlement, which were entirely interrupted by the war.

Next to this was an extensive grant to a body of men, called the Plymouth company, of fifteen miles, on each side of the Kennebeck river, and extending a considerable distance along the same—This tract was, also, in the hands of a few
wealthy

wealthy proprietors, who reserved it, in an uncultivated state, knowing that it would yield a great interest, when disposed of for settlement, which is now taking place.

An additional reason may be given, for the reluctance of the British government, to consent to grants of land in the District—Some of the lands abound in pines of the finest growth—The reservation of these lands preserved this valuable timber in the disposal of the crown, and for the use of the royal navy.

These are among the most operative causes, which have hitherto retarded the settlement of this fine country.—They are now happily removed, and the best founded expectations are entertained of the progressive prosperity of the District.

From the peace of one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three, until the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four, when the contest with Great Britain commenced, such parts of the District, as could be occupied, were fast settling, and many people emigrated to that country—The war arrested the progress of settlement, and checked emigration until the peace of one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three.

Since which time, the population of the District has been more than doubled, and now amounts to upwards of one hundred and six thousand.

Another reason, why the District of Maine was not sooner settled, may be drawn from the mode of settling, which has generally prevailed throughout America, namely, to occupy, in the first instance, the lands nearest to the capitals—of
course

course the lands, nearest to the town of Boston, which were not fully settled till since the late war with France, obtained a preference, in settlement, over those of the District, which were more remote from the capital.

HAVING noticed your several questions, and given such answers, as occurred at the moment, (I wish I had more time) I will add one idea of my own, which relates to the making of iron, in the various branches of it—It is prosecuted inland in this commonwealth, to advantage, where the coals are double the price they would cost in the District, and where the transportation is a heavy drawback on the profits.—A word to the wise is enough.

I HAVE now closed my answers to your several questions—They are necessarily short, as I have confined myself, therein, very much to a state of facts, as I suggested to you, in the first instance, I should.—Had I suffered myself to have gone into probable conjecture, they might have been more satisfactory to you—but, in that case, I could not have been accountable, in equal degree, for the authenticity of these observations.

I have the honor of being,

Dear Sir,

With great esteem,

Your obedient servant,

B. LINCOLN.

WILLIAM BINGHAM, Esquire.

QUERIES PROPOSED TO MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE OF MASSACHUSETTS, WITH THEIR ANSWERS ANNEXED THERETO.

“ WHAT was the population of the District of Maine in the year one thousand, seven hundred and ninety-one, when the Census was taken?”

When the Census was taken, in one thousand, seven hundred and ninety-one, there were ninety-six thousand, five hundred and forty.

“ What has been the increase of population, by the most reasonable estimate, since that time?”

By the report of a committee of both houses of the Legislature of Massachusetts, now in session, there are now, in Maine, upwards of one hundred and six thousand.

“ What causes, in your opinion, will be most likely to accelerate the population of the District?”

A separate government, the establishment of schools, opening of roads, and a grant of a lot of land to each settler.

“ What advantages are derived to the District of Maine, from the independence of the United States, and from the system of legislation in Massachusetts, that will tend to promote the rapid settlement of this country?”

The district participates of the inestimable advantages, which result, to every part of the Union, from this important and interesting event.

“ Are not the advantages of situation, and the fertility of soil, in this country, great stimulants to the industry of its inhabitants?”

Yes, equal to any of the eastern states.

“ Is the country healthy—and are the people remarked for longevity?”

The air and climate are remarkably salubrious.

“ Is it not probable, from the progression of population, and cheapness of living, that manufactures will flourish, and rapidly increase, in the District?”

No: the advantages resulting from clearing the lands, and cultivating the soil, will, for many years to come, preclude the increase of manufactures in general.

“ Does not the vicinity of the sea countervail the small difference in latitudinal position, and render the climate of Maine more temperate than that of the Genesee country?”

This is not yet fully ascertained.

“ Does not the clearing of the land sensibly affect the climate, and render it more mild?”

Most certainly, this is the consequence.

“ Does not the arable ground, of this country, yield very well, when sown in English grain, as wheat, barley, oats, &c.”

The improvements of agriculture, within the last ten years, fully evince that the country is friendly to the production of wheat, barley, oats, rye, &c.—Barley never fails.

“ Do the meadow, and upland pasture, yield well of the grass, natural to the soil, and of the English grasses, when sown?”

No country affords better forage or finer pastures.

“ Are the lands, in the District, well adapted to the raising of oxen, sheep, mules and horses?”

The answer to the foregoing article, evinces that this must be answered in the affirmative.

“ Are the fleeces of the sheep large, and the quality of the wool good?”

Equal to any in the United States.

“ Does the abundance of grass, and hay, promise to render it a great provision country, in meats, butter, and cheese?”

The grass and hay, being of a good nutritive quality, and in great abundance, promise a large supply of these articles.—It is allowed to be the best grazing country in the Union.

“ Does not the proximity of the District to the banks of Newfoundland, and the smaller banks that lie on the coast, make it a most eligible situation for the establishment of fisheries?”

Most certainly, this is the truth.

“ Do the banks and the rivers, within the District, so abound in fish, as to ensure a certain and ample supply at all seasons?”

The whole country abounds in codfish, and most of the rivers produce salmon and sturgeon plentifully; besides which, bass, smelts, and other fish, are caught in the rivers during the winter.

“ What are the different kinds of fish, taken on the coast and in the rivers?”

Partly answered in the preceding article; besides which, there are caught, on the coast, haddock, polluck, hake,
mackerel

mackarel, herring, &c. in great abundance:—herring, shad and alewives are caught, in the rivers, in the spring and summer.

“ What are the several species of game and wild fowl in the District?”

Moose, bear, otter, beaver, sable, minx, martin, foxes, muskrats, rabbits, &c. geese, brandts, ducks, teal, and a great variety of wild-fowl, besides the largest and finest partridges, and wild pigeons.

“ Is the soil well adapted to hemp and flax?”

Peculiarly so.

“ Will the productions of the middle states generally succeed in the District?”

In general they will.

“ Have there been any discoveries of lead, copper, or iron ores?”

Large quantities of iron ore have been discovered in the District.

“ Do lime and stone, abound in the District?”

Yes, in great plenty, in some parts of the District.

“ Has coal been found in the District, and at what distance from navigable water?”

No search hath yet been made for this article.

“ What are the advantages to be derived from the wood that abounds in the neighbourhood of the sea?—May it be readily converted into planks, boards, scantling, shingles, and staves?”

Yes.

" May the wood, which is more remote from navigation, be profitably converted into pot and pearl ashes?"

Great advantages may be obtained by converting the wood, remote from navigation, into these articles.

" Will the cord-wood, which is not consumed in the manufactures of the District, find a good market at Boston, and in the other sea-port towns of Massachusetts?"

Yes, a great number of sloops, and other vessels, are continually employed in this carrying business.

" Do rock and sea-weed abound on the coast?"

Yes.

" What proportion of lumber is allowed to the proprietor of the land, from which the timber is cut, and delivered to him free of expence, at the saw-mill?"

One eighth part.

" Are there many mill-seats in the District, and are they plentifully supplied with water?"

Yes, as many, and as good, perhaps, as in any part of the world.

" What will be the expence of a saw-mill, and how much lumber will it saw annually?"

From six hundred to one thousand dollars, including the dam.

" At what rates were good lands, situated on the navigable waters of the District, sold, previous to the late war?"

The price was different, in different places.

“ What is the average price of uncultivated lands, in the settled townships, in the District?”

From one dollar to five dollars per acre.

“ Can the land be cleared for giving the first crop, as a compensation, to the person who clears it?”

No.

“ What articles can the District of Maine furnish for the consumption of the West India islands, and for the European market?”

Mafts, fpars, boards, plank, fhingles, ftaves, oak and pine timber, and lumber of all forts; pot and pearl afhes; oak and hemlock bark for tanneries; and fifh, fuch as cod, fturgeon, falmon, fhad, herring, &c.

“ Which of the exotic fruits would fucceed in the District?”

Apples, pears, plumbs, currants, &c. fucceed well.

“ Is ginfeng found in the District?”

Yes, in large quantities, and of excellent quality.

“ Are the harbours, in the District, fafe and acceffible?”

Yes, there are a great number of capacious, fafe, and acceffible harbours in this District, which exceed any on the continent.

“ From the quantity of bark to be obtained in the District, do you not fuppose that tanneries would flourifh?”

There are, already, many tanneries eftablifhed, and they are in a flourifhing condition.

“ Might

" Might not bark become a valuable export from the District?"

It may.

" When is the seed time and the harvest?"

Seed is in May; harvest, for European grain, the last of July; for maize, October.

" When does the winter set in, and what is its usual duration?"

From the first of December to the first of April.

" Is the sea navigation free throughout the winter?"

Yes.

" What are the average prices of lumber, viz. masts, planks, boards, scantling, staves, and shingles?"

The prices are in proportion to the demand.

" May ship-building be expected to form an article of important consideration in that country?"

Ship-building is, already, an article of important consideration, in this District, and will, undoubtedly, increase, as the materials are to be found, here, in great abundance.

DANIEL CONY,	} A committee of Senators and Representatives from the District of Maine, thirteenth of March, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three.
J. GARDINER,	
FRANCIS WINTER,	
DAVID SILVESTER,	

Portland—

Portland—District of Maine.

A Meteorological Diary, for the year 1792, abbreviated.

The Observations were at eight A. M. and at one, and nine P. M.—The Thermometer, in a part, on the north west, of a house, in a room not heated by fire, and open to the air.

Days	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.
10	24. 34. 34.	13. 16. 20.	32. 37. 39.	35. 45. 45.	51. 59. 56.	58. 72. 66.
20	20. 23. 23.	24. 27. 29.	25. 30. 29.	42. 45. 52.	53. 57. 58.	54. 62. 56.
30	27. 32. 31.	30. 32. 44.	41. 45. 46.	45. 54. 49.	60. 65. 61.	60. 68. 66.

Days	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.
10	62. 73. 66.	68. 79. 68.	54. 64. 62.	42. 44. 43.	41. 43. 44.	15. 20. 23.
20	62. 66. 61.	60. 68. 65.	63. 64. 71.	32. 40. 38.	19. 22. 25.	21. 22. 22.
30	66. 72. 66.	60. 64. 63.	46. 62. 63.	38. 38. 34.	28. 32. 34.	18. 24. 26.

Coldest day in the year, January twenty-third, 4. 9. 13.

Warmest day July eleventh, 77. 91. 76.

From the twenty-seventh of November to the first of January, the preceding observations were of the year 1791.

